Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

Fall 1991 **Volume 3, Number 3**

Arboretum Library
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Arcadia, CA 91007
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A Publication of the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

Garden interns make big impact in just 10 weeks

Rejuvenating the gardens was the main goal for the 12 students enrolled in the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Garden's internship program for 10 weeks this summer.

Several areas of the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum came in for major overhauls, frost damaged plants were replaced at Virginia Robinson Gardens and Descanso Gardens received a number of new features. In turn, the students learned plant identification and different horticultural techniques.

At the Arboretum, the interns concentrated on the Demonstration Home Garden. Before any changes were made, they were required to make a proposal, design a style and lay out an irrigation system. An outmoded garden with a wooden deck and an overhead trellis turned into a Japanese-style garden complete with bonsai and a rock-edged pool. Next to it the students created an English-style garden with drought tolerant plants and brick walkways. Two of the interns returned to finish the project on their own time after their 10-week paid stint was up.

A 150-year-old wishing well that had long languished near the waterfall found new prominence in the circle in front of Ayres Hall. It was up to the interns to move it and decide how the carved marble and wrought iron well would fit into the garden.

"To tie the whole Arboretum together and focus on the historical aspect of the garden—from the Queen Anne Cottage to the movies that have been filmed here—a Victorian theme throughout the design works best," says Tony Exter, a Cal Poly Pomona student working on his masters degree in landscape architecture.

Inspired by the archways at the Huntington Garden, they planned seven metal arches covered with roses and other flowering vines to line the walk leading to where the well now sits in a bed of flowers.

"The Arboretum has a lot of exposed areas, and alleviating the boredom and

*(Please see **INTERNS** , page 7)*

Monica Curi

Leslie Kwartin (left) and Tony Exter place new plants around the Arboretum's wishing well .

Director's corner

This inaugurates what I hope will become a regular feature of *Arboreta and Botanic Gardens* in which I can share my plans and expectations, as well as joys and frustrations, with you. Hopefully, the positives will prevail.

My first three months on the job have demonstrated to me the need to address some major changes in the operation of the various gardens. Foremost, in my mind, as it is with most cultural organizations, is money. It's quite understandable that, as public funding continues to dwindle, we see an increasing competitiveness for available private support.

To competitively position ourselves in the private support environment it will be necessary to reassess our programs and operations. Simply stated: Are we meeting our visitors' expectations? What programs or improvements would they like to see? What can we do to make a visit to one of our gardens a more interesting and urgent alternative to the numerous other such attractions in the greater Los Angeles area?

We will soon begin an ambitious customer research program designed to answer these questions. Going hand-in-glove with this will be a continuing program to improve and upgrade our physical facilities. Such efforts will be reported elsewhere in this and future issues.

Now, having said that, I would be remiss if I didn't mention a few of the many positives I have found. I can start by mentioning the four beautiful gardens we maintain for the enjoyment of our visitors—each in its own flora, geographical location and microclimate. Next, I should point to the Department's small but dedicated staff, supported by over 120,000 hours of volunteer help each year. The five nonprofit support organizations, their boards of trustees and staff are highly motivated and committed to preserving and improving the gardens' numerous public service programs, as well as supporting necessary physical improvements. Also, in spite of severe budget constraints, I find the Board of Supervisors and County management to be most supportive of the gardens.

Finally, as the "new kid on the block," I want to close by expressing my appreciation for the opportunity that has been afforded me. I look forward to the challenges ahead, as well as the accomplishments and rewards that I know will follow. I also look forward to meeting many of you in the weeks and months ahead. My door is always open, so drop by when you have a moment!

--- Ken Smith

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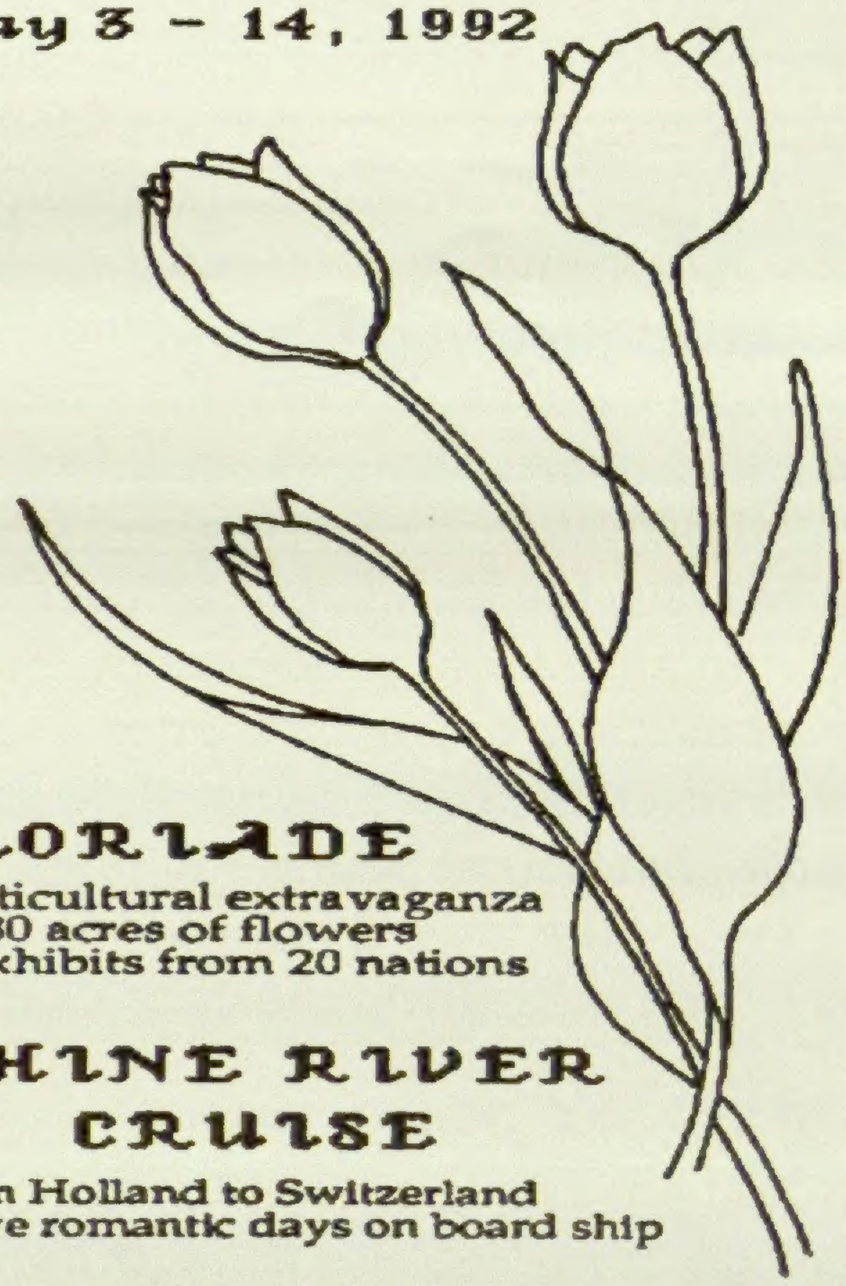

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Old reed organ donated to Queen Anne Cottage

Dr. and Mrs. Benton Corley have moved to Pauma Valley near Fallbrook after 40 years in Arcadia, but they leave behind a treasured old reed organ. They donated the walnut framed organ to the Historical Section at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum where it is displayed in the music room of the Queen Anne Cottage.

Arboretum history curator Sandy Snider said that this organ is interesting because the manufacturer, C.B. Hunt and Co. of Boston, made "Bay State" organs like the Corley's for only 20 years—between 1870 and 1890.

"Though it's not particularly rare, it is a beautiful piece," Ms. Snider says."Reed organs were popular parlor accessories in Victorian homes. About 39,000 were turned out by C.B. Hunt and Co. alone by 1886, the year the cottage was completed."

Other antique musical instruments displayed in the cottage include a rosewood square grand piano made by Decker and Sons, a salon harp by the French manufacturer Erard, and a miniature rosewood organ called a melodeon.

LuAnn B. Munns

Dr. and Mrs. Benton Corley approve placement of the organ they donated to the Arboretum.

The instruments are visible through the windows of the Queen Anne Cottage every day. For a closer look, plan to take a tour of the interior on Dec. 7 and 8 when it is open for the Christmas Open House both Saturday and Sunday.

Month-long festival welcomes fall at South Coast Botanic Garden

A month-long chrysanthemum festival celebrates fall at the South Coast Botanic Garden with about 7,000 potted mums making a colorful splash.

The festival opens with a special show Oct. 19-20, Saturday from noon to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After the weekend show, the mum display will continue in the Shade Garden from Oct. 21 through Nov. 10 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day.

The thousands of chrysanthemum plants have been grown for the show by volunteers from the South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation. About one-quarter will be on display at any one time. Since chrysanthemum flowers last about two weeks, fresh ones will be added throughout the show. The flowers will appear in a dazzling variety of styles and forms. Pompons, anemone, spider and decorative forms which belong to the species *Chrysanthemum morifolium*, or florists' mum, will be the flower of the hour. Sizes range from pin cushion to plate-sized. Colors include yellow, red, pink, orange, bronze, purple, lavendar and multicolors.

Cascade and bonsai styles will be featured. In the cascade style, the main stem is brought sharply downward from above the rim of a container and trained to give a waterfall effect. Small anemone and small to medium single and double blossom varieties are the most effective cascade types.

In bonsai style, the chrysanthemum is pruned and shaped to resemble classic Oriental forms.

"Deck the Halls" at Descanso

The annual Guild Christmas Show at Descanso Gardens in La Canada Flintridge will bring an international flavor to the theme "Deck the Halls." From Dec. 7 through Dec. 30, each room in the Hospitality House will represent a different country. Several local interior decorators will use Christmas trees and accessories to create Holiday vignettes ranging from Bavarian to Oriental.

About 175 artworks including paintings in all media, sculptures, photographs and ceramics displayed throughout the gallery will add to the Holiday mood. A tram pulled by a fanciful reindeer will take visitors on free trips to the Hospitality House which will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Van de Kamp Hall will be the setting for wreath-making demonstrations Dec. 7-16. Visitors can learn how to make novel wreaths from herbs, succulents and mixed evergreens during the three daily demonstrations.

During the entire show the main lawn will be decorated with large outdoor displays constructed by families and individuals, all competing for the prize which will be awarded to the display that most closely depicts the Spirit of Christmas. These will be open for viewing from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Christmas Day when the gardens are closed.

Children will also enjoy having their photographs taken with Santa. Youngsters of all ages will relish a ride on the miniature train that leaves from a little red-painted depot near the tram loading area and travels on rails that loop through the rose garden. The little steam engine that pulls scale-model flat cars and caboose will be driven by volunteer engineers from the Los Angeles Live Steamers model train club.

A crafts boutique will offer unusual, handmade Holiday gifts for shoppers intent on finding the perfect present for those with a taste for natural gifts.

Jaunty driver Paul McBride guides the "reindeer powered" tram.

One Hundred Santas to visit Arboretum

The many faces of Santa Claus will highlight a Christmas Open House Dec. 7-8 at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. Docents will lead free tours through the interior of the Queen Anne Cottage and the Santa Anita Depot from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday.

More than 100 images depicting the Jolly Old Elf in china, carved wood, blown glass, postwar plastic and papier mache will be exhibited in the Queen Anne Cottage and the Coach Barn.

An eclectic crowd of Santas will cluster around the live Christmas tree in the parlor of the Cottage and overflow into the music room. Among the unusual ones are an antique cast iron Santa bank, a starfish Santa, articulated folk art Santas, Santa in a chef's hat and one with a horse in his arms from Santa Anita Racetrack.

In the Coach Barn a dozen Duncan Royale facsimiles, handpainted by Roni Eventov, will trace the evolution of the Santa legend down through the centuries. Posters beside each of the foot-tall figures—beginning with Black Peter from the Middle Ages and continuing down to the "Coca Cola Santa" garbed in red velvet—will tell the folk tale that each statue illustrates.

Another exhibit in the Coach Barn will feature turn-of-the-century textiles. Needlework examples will include handmade clothing like cloaks, dresses and underclothes as well as doilies, antimacassars and embroidered handiwork.

A "gadget guessit" display in the Depot will challenge visitors' knowledge of antique tools. An old apple peeler, a cream tester and a link-and-pin railroad car coupler are among the mysterious-looking examples of early American ingenuity.

The Hugo Reid Adobe, the only historical building that must be viewed only through the windows during the Open House, will be decorated with pinatas and straw Nativity figures like those from the time of the California rancheros.

Tours through the Cottage and Depot are included in the Arboretum admission price, but donations from generous visitors will be used for improving and maintaining the historical section.

LuAnn B. Munns

Historic/Preservation co-chairmen Jocelyn Pitts (left) and Marnie Norvell admire some of the Santas that will decorate the Cottage and Coach Barn during the Open House Dec. 7 and 8.

"Holiday in the Garden" at South Coast

Shopping will become a festive celebration during "Holiday in the Garden" Nov. 8 and 9 at the South Coast Botanic Garden. Foundation volunteers have been busy for months planning the entertainment, collecting silent auction items, propagating plants and making Holiday craft items. Christmas music by wandering carolers will surround shoppers with the joyous sounds of the season.

At a gala preview Friday from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Foundation members and guests can do some early shopping and enjoy Holiday entertainment and refreshments. Call the Foundation at (213) 544-1847 to reserve some of the limited tickets available.

The sale will be in full swing Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with music, food and a wide selection of unique gifts. A silent auction from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. als gives shoppers a chance to select major gifts at bargain prices. Bidders may choose among weekend getaways to San Diego or Circus Circus in Las Vegas or take a chance on an unforgettable 14-day cruise of the South Pacific on the Island Princess.

A Holiday luncheon Saturday noon will probably sell out early says chairman Sharon Ryan, so call the Foundation soon to reserve tickets. On the program is a fashion show called "Art to Wear," featuring clothing and jewelry designed by the Palos Verdes Art Center Artists Studio. The handmade items include everything from casual fleece suits to elegant evening wear, all touched with artistic flair.

A Holiday make-over by Merle Norman Cosmetic Studios and "Balloon Pop" centerpieces that contain prize chits will add to the fun at the luncheon.

The Holiday luncheon at the South Coast Botanic Garden will feature unique designs from the Palos Verdes Art Center Artists' Studio.

Fashions will include one-of-a-kind machine knits by Judith Soloman (left) and handpainted silk dresses by Judy Barnes Baker (right).

INTERNS at the Gardens

(continued from page 1)

sunniness of this particular area will be a good start," says Leslie Kwartin, also a Cal Poly masters candidate.

Besides designing a whole new look for the Arboretum, the interns did basic gardening. Pruning, weeding, digging, learning new propagation techniques and installing a new irrigation system for the front entrance also kept the studtents busy.

"To be able to take a tree that hasn't been pruned in 40 years and turn it into something beautiful is great," says Scott Shrader who is also inthe Cal Poly Pomona masters degree program in landscape architecture.

Sandra Hemstock is a Pasadena City College student taking courses in art and architecture. For a registered nurse, switching to landscape architecture was a radical change that she had wanted to make for a long time.

"This is it," says Sandra. " I love working outside with the plants and the elements creating gardens."

Learning to graft was the most enjoyable activity for UCLA student Kristen Kwan. "Taking a common tree and changing the top structure and flower color is really interesting," she says.

The two interns at Virginia Robinson Gardens spent most of their time replacing dead plants left after the winter frost of 1990, changing the look of the front entrance, working at routine maintenance of the garden, and becoming more involved with the docents. Joaquin Contreras and Cindy Larsen both attend horticulture classes at UCLA taught by Robinson Gardens supervisor John Copeland.

Joaquin, an intern last year, was responsible for replanting impatiens, chrysanthemums, straw plants and salvias. "The cold winter did a lot of damage, and not all the areas could be changed until I got here," he says. Joaquin also changed flowers near the front entrance.

Cindy has her own business called "Landscape Solutions." As a garden designer and installer, she finds working at Robinson Gardens a tremendous learning experience. Cindy installs new plant material and tends the rose garden and herbaceous perennial flower beds. She also helps the volunteers and performs administrative chores. "We receive many compliments from visitors, and John's teaching makes us look forward to coming to work," she says.

"Rowing a boat out into the middle of a lake to gather tule reeds and getting paid for it...that's a job?" asks Descanso intern Christine King with a grin. Her attitude sums up how all five students there feel about their summer experience.

The tule reeds were planted on an island that houses a bird sanctuary. When the reeds grow they will form a screen for the nesting birds, giving them privacy. All the students liked the tule reed project best and agreed that overall, they gained a lot of horticultural knowledge.

"It was a great hands-on experience," says Natalie de Garder, a UC Davis resource science major and a returning intern. "What I learned here was often different from what I learned in school, but it applied."

The students also planted 4,000 amaryllis bulbs, built a decomposed granite pathway and installed a drip irrigation system in the fruit orchard in the special education garden and continued improvements in the herb garden.

Michael Coughlin, a student at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo majoring in environmental biology, felt that the most rewarding aspect of the internship was seeing the outcome of the projects he started.

"For the drip irrigation system I followed a design, dug the trenches, installed the pipes and was able to water the trees using

Interns

(continued from page 7)

the system. I found that rewarding" says Michael.

Catherine Decker, an ornamental horticulture major at Mt. San Antonio College, worked in the herb garden. She felt the biggest reward was seeing the interns' impact on the gardens. "There was a big before and after change in all the projects, but expecially in the herb garden," she says.

Teresa Canode is a horticulture major at El Camino College where she is in the middle of a career change. An accountant for a film production company for 17 years, she decided to go back to school.

"I'm very happy with what I'm doing, and I'm sure I made a really good decision," she says. "It's something I've always wanted to do."

Interns at all the gardens expressed gratitude for the learning experience, had fun, and became better home gardeners. As Arboretum intern Kristen Kwan succinctly put it, "Where else can you go to work and prune a tree from the Himalayas?"

Monica Curi

Dale Witt

Above: *Interns' Home Garden project progresses.*

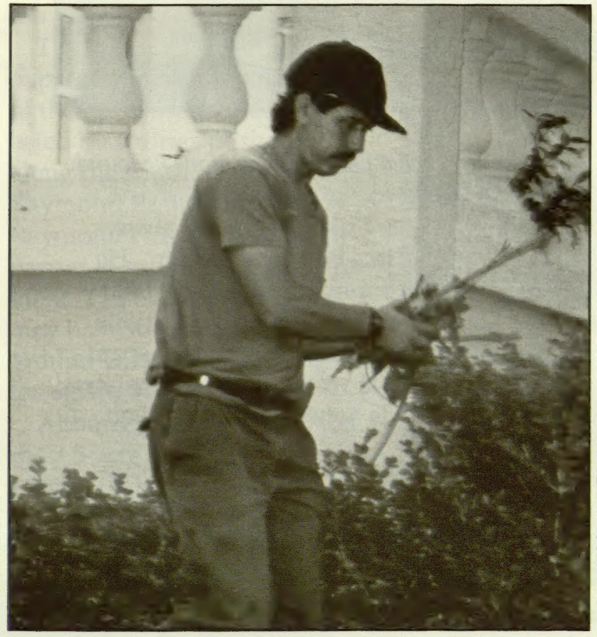
Top right: *Arboretum interns are (from left) Scott Shrader, Leslie Kwartin, Tony Exter, Kristen Kwan, Sandra Hemstock and Steven Schulz.*

Right: *Cindy Larsen (above) and Joaquin Contreras (below) groom borders ar Robinson Gardens.*

Below: *Planting bulbs are Descanso interns (from left) Natalie de Garder, Christine King, Catherine Decker, Michael Coughlin. Standing is Teresa Candoe.*

Monica Curi

Monica Curi



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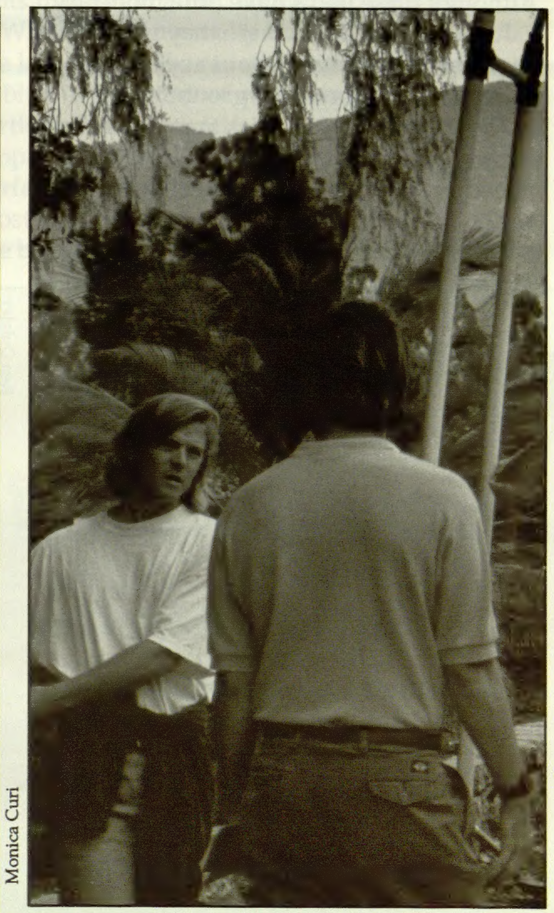


Monica Curi

Intern Scott Shrader (left) shows new Arboretum design to Tim Lindsay, Assistant Superintendent.

Finding Indian stones all in day's work for Glenn-Erik

Glenn-Erik Klevdal knew he had made a significant find as soon as he spotted the carved stone in the lake bed at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. "It had a hole in it and was made of the same kind of rock Suzanne had shown me before," he recalls.

Suzanne Granger, herbarium curator, has the training and experience in field archaeology that helps her recognize Indian artifacts during mapping sessions on the Arboretum grounds. When she finds a worked stone item such as a hand axe or arrowhead, she often shows it to the grounds staff before turning it over to the history section. Although these items have little monetary value, knowledge of where they were found provides information about ancient settlements on the Arboretum grounds.

The three-inch wide disk that Glenn-Erik found turned out to be a "cog stone" estimated at between 2,000 and 4,000 years of age by George Gumermann, archaeologist with the Institute of Archaeology at UCLA. These mysterious objects are often found at burial sites of the Chumash Indians.

The one now in the Arboretum's collection, carved of the tannish-gray granitic rock common in the area, has a precisely beveled hole in the center and traces of fluting around the outer edge.

Archaeologists speculate that the stones probably served a strictly ceremonial or symbolic purpose since they never show signs of hard wear. In his book *The Natural World of the California Indians,* Robert Heizer writes that "Some ethnographic information indicates that they were suspended over preferred fishing spots...marking either an individual's claim or hoped-for luck by the owner." He adds that the central perforation suggests that the stones could also have been mounted on a stick.

When Glenn-Erik found the cog stone he was working along the western edge of the lake. The fork lift he was operating churned up the dry lake bed, exposing the artifact about six inches below the surface.

This is all in a day's work for Glenn-Erik. As a general maintenance worker he does cement work, masonry work, tends the pools and makes deliveries besides operating tractors and heavy equipment.

"That's why I like what I'm doing," he says. "Because it's different every day."

Although he grew up in rural Colorado during a six-year drought which ruled out gardening, Glenn-Erik says he had always wanted to work in a botanical garden. He started at the Arboretum in January 1980 under a federal grant funding the guayule rubber substitute research going on here at the time. After two weeks he was transferred out to the grounds where he has worked ever since.

Ken Quigley

Glenn-Erik Klevdal holds the cog stone he found.

Besides a hoped-for career, Glenn-Erik found another dividend at the Arboretum—his wife, Porfidia. The two met when she was a summer intern in 1984. After their marriage in 1990 they moved to Pasadena,

home base for Porfidia's full-charge bookkeeping service.

To advance his career Glenn-Erik constantly attends classes at local community colleges. At Mt. San Antonio he studied horticultural science including tree care and maintenance. Now he's at Pasadena City College concentrating on computers.

"It's a computer world now," he says. But as much as he may be looking into the future, Glenn-Erik still had time to glance down to see a curiously carved rock that shows the Arboretum's place in history that stretches back thousands of years.

Arboretum lake dries up for first time in a century

Now that the water level in the lake at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum has fallen drastically, plans are being made to remove a century's worth of accumulated silt from the lake bed.

The lake was last cleaned out in the late 1800s by E.J. "Lucky" Baldwin who owned Santa Anita Ranch at the time. It was also during Baldwin's tenure that the lake dried up following a severe drought, said Sandra Snider, history curator for the Arboretum.

The lake was formed at least 3,000 years ago by the Raymond Hill fault that also raised Tallac Knoll. The fault splits near the west end of the lens-shaped hill, squeezing up the ancient rocks between the two fault lines the same way that pinching a slippery seed between the fingers forces it upward.

The lake, called a "fault depression," is like a negative of the upthrust Tallac Knoll. It is fed by springs pushed up along the south edge of the Raymond Basin where the Raymond Hill fault forms a barrier to ground water movement. The current drought may have lowered the underground water level causing the springs to dry up.

Although heavy rains filled the 3.5-acre lake to capacity in March, the water has since drained away, leaving most of the lake bed exposed. If not removed, mud banks and small pools may create a mosquito problem or health hazard, said John Provine, superintendent of the Arboretum.

"However, we will seek the cooperation of appropriate Health Department and Agricultural Commission officials to monitor and, if necessary, mitigate any such problems that might arise," added Mr. Provine.

Wildlife that normally live in and around the lake seem to have taken the diminishing habitat in stride. Most of the birds and turtles have apparently migrated to the Upper Lagoon which is replenished by surface runoff from nearby areas. Fish, mostly catfish and a few introduced carp, are being relocated.

Ken Quigley

The Arboretum lake bed is exposed for the first time in recent history.

Garden gives meaningful experience to exceptional children

For 30 years, the Exceptional Children's Program at Descanso Gardens has offered meaningful garden experiences for children ranging from 7 to 21 years in age.

Conducted by volunteers from the Descanso Gardens Guild, the gardening activities plus nature walks in the garden give students an increased awareness of outdoor life as well as a knowledge of living plants and animals.

"We try to show them that there is some beauty in the world," says Donna Sullivan, chairman of the program.

Students come from surrounding school districts in Los Angeles, Glendale, Pasadena, and La Canada Flintridge. The 150 children in the program cover a wide range. Some are mentally or physically handicapped, some are blind, some are deaf, and some have learning disablities. But they all seem to benefit from working in the garden plots.

A student carefully waters his plants in the Exceptional Childrens' Garden at Descanso.

"You can see them change right before your eyes," says Mrs. Sullivan. "When new students come they sometimes grumble about the weeding. But the old hands in class encourage the new kids." This cooperation and interaction is often new to the students.

"It's rewarding to see them start trying to talk and work things out," she says. What about those such as the severely handicapped who can't contribute as much? "They just smile a lot," says Mrs. Sullivan.

Gardening classes parallel school sessions with children planting vegetables like radishes, turnips and lettuce in the fall. After each weekly session the students leave with at least a sackful of produce, although Mrs. Sullivan says she has seen some particularly successful classes take out a wheelbarrow full of vegetables. A class this summer had the exciting experience of seeing sunflower seeds grow from nothing to become small trees, she adds.

Each class is responsible for one or sometimes two of the 10 by 20 foot plots and cares for it with the guidance of their teacher and Guild docents. They will also be involved with the orchard of young fruit trees recently given to the garden. More than a dozen fruit trees were donated by San Marino Nurseries, South Pasadena; Armstrong Garden Center, Monrovia; Descanso Gardens Plant Propagation volunteers; and Guild member Bartje Miller.

Occasionally classes undertake special projects such as container gardening.

"We teach them how to plant things in pots, showing them that there is something out there that they can control," says Mrs. Sullivan. "Even though they can't control much of the world around them, or even their own bodies sometimes, they can make a

difference with these plants."

A new resource center should be finished in October. This 200-square-foot wooden building will be fitted with compartments for storing equipment and supplies. Placed near the gardening plots, it will be easier for the students to learn to care for their tools.

The award-winning program has been honored by the American Horticultural Society, and Superintendent Dr. Steve Cohan was asked to present a report on it at the annual meeting of the American Association of Botanic Gardens and Arboreta this spring.

Robinson family films now on videotape

Priceless 70-year-old movie film footage taken at the Virginia Robinson Gardens has been restored by the Friends of Robinson Gardens. The garden is one of the first estates in Beverly Hills

Taken over a period of about 25 years beginning in the 1920s, the footage shows Harry and Virginia Robinson relaxing in the garden with their family, pets and the Hollywood actors who were their frequent guests.

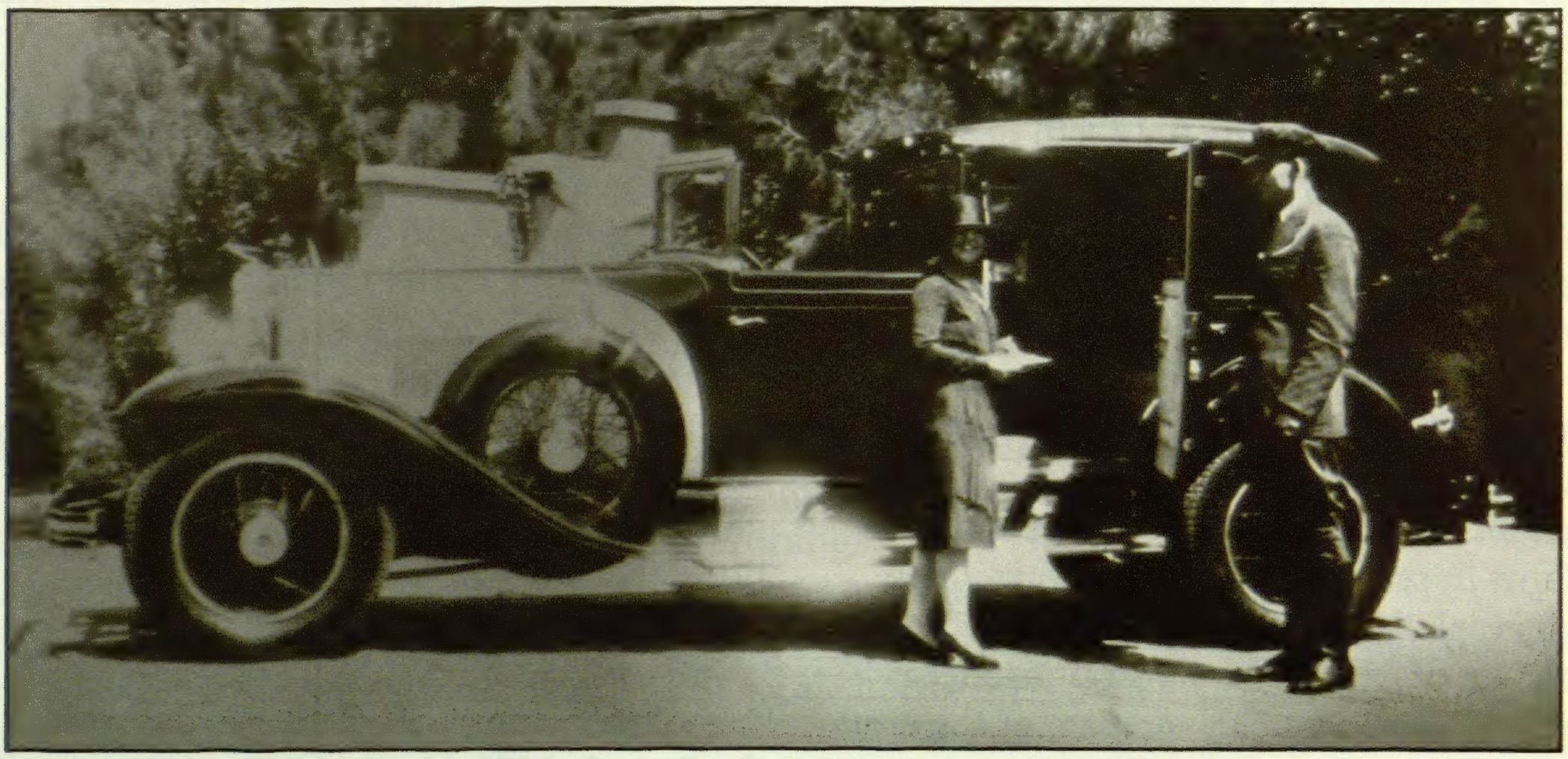
"We think one of the people in the films is Charlie Chaplin," said John Copeland, garden supervisor. "With further research we should be able to identify more people."

The films also document lively Robinson family frolics. One segment shows them building snowmen on the front lawn. In another, pet dogs push blocks of ice around in the swimming pool.

Now reproduced on video cassettes, parts of the home movies will be used in the new childrens' garden tour program that begins this fall.

"Third-graders love television, so this will give them a vivid idea of what life was like in the garden 60 or 70 years ago," said Mr. Copeland. Selections from the two hours of film footage are also shown to garden docents and visitors.

Found tucked away in the mansion library, the archival 16 millimeter film had deteriorated badly. It was restored by Film Technology, Inc., using a new process developed in England that corrects fading and color distortion.



Videotapes of the old movies will join vintage photos such as this one in the Robinson archives.

Holland, Floriade highlight garden tour

Support groups for the four Department gardens are offering a guided, 12-day tour of Holland in 1992. The tour from May 3-14 includes in the price of $3298 a donation to whichever garden the traveler chooses. Highlights of the tour include a visit to the Floriade and a five-day Rhine River cruise.

Holland, officially known as the Netherlands, is called "The Flower Garden of Europe" because more flowers are cultivated here, in proportion to its size, than anywhere else in the world. Thousands of acres are covered with tulips, narcissus, hyacinths and daffodils while the blossoms of countless fruit trees float above the springtime landscape.

The tour has been planned to include the beauty spots of Holland during the height of the flower season, as well as the horticultural extravaganza called the Floriade. Held only once every 10 years, the Floriade features exhibits covering about 180 acres from more than 20 countries.

The tour is under the direction of Elizabeth Sides, former president of the Robinson Gardens Foundation. For detailed information call Mrs. Sides at (213) 472-5565 or All-Ways Travel Service (213) 553-8707.

Tulips fill one of 13 indoor Floriade exhibits.

Schools to begin tours of Robinson Gardens

Docents and staff at the Virginia Robinson Gardens have finished preparation for school field trips this fall. For the past 10 weeks 20 volunteers have been attending classes taught by landscape architects, botanists and other specialists under the leadership of John Copeland, Supervisor of Robinson Gardens.

The goal of the new field trip program, says Pat Isaac, chair of the Children's Garden Program, is to provide a "hands on" nature and gardening experience for children through demonstration, explanation and participation. The plan is to expose and connect the child to local history, the beautification of their environment, the fundamentals of botany and the utilization of plants in practical, domestic ways. The principal theme of the program will be the concept of respect for natural resources through conservation and care of the environment.

The program is designed for third grade students. Each week a different group of 32 or fewer children will come to the gardens for one and a half hours. They will gather near the main residence to learn the history of Robinson Gardens. Then each class will be divided into groups of 10 and taken to three stations.

The children will spend 15 to 20 minutes at each station learning facts about nature and gardening, with a different topic taught at each station. In the Herb Garden students will be asked to match the picture of an herb with its use. A game played with palm seeds will help children learn the botany of palms in the Palm Garden. In the flower garden, children will learn about the functions and uses of flowers during a touch and smell game.

Initially, classes participating in the school field trips will probably come from the Beverly Hills Unified School District.

South Coast sale: a source for fall planting inspiration

Volunteers at the South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation are making it easy to start gardening this fall with a plant sale Oct. 5 and 6 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The sale will appeal to canny gardeners who know that by planting in the fall they give perennials and trees an extra season to establish a strong root system that will help them cope with the stress of summer.

Sturdy plants with colorful flowers have been propagated by the hundreds especially for the sale. The volunteers who have done all the work have chosen many of the sale offerings because the plants are seldom found in typical nurseries. Bush bougainvilleas, verbena hybrids, perennial nemesia and a wide selection of salvias are variations of favorite drought tolerant landscaping choices.

Alstroemeria, with pastel or vivid azalea-like petals speckled with darker colors, is a good choice to plant now for color next spring. Although it needs plenty of water in the spring, it should be allowed to dry out later, leaving more water for the rest of the summer-stressed garden.

Several fast growing trees with bright flowers will be available at the sale. All are small trees scaled to fit into tight spots in the garden. The river wattle (*Acacia subporosa)* is a graceful tree with weeping branches that bears puffy yellow flowers in the spring. The scarlet wisteria tree *(Sesbania tripetii)* will soon grow to become a bright spot of color in a container or patio. Choose a bird of paradise bush *(Caesalpinia gilliesii)* for a summer-long profusion of yellow flowers adorned with long, protruding vermillion stamens.

Daylilies, succulents and several rosemary cultivars are just a few of the plants on sale at bargain prices. Now with the weather cooling off is the best time to get started on a colorful garden spring and summer garden that will require little water.

Descanso Garden to test AARS roses beginning in 1992

Descanso Gardens has been chosen as an All-America Rose Selection test garden, the only official facility in Southern California. The 50 to 55 roses being tested in 1992-93 will arrive in January, said Descanso superintendent Dr. Steve Cohan.

The cultivars are all new hybrids being considered for the AARS designation by All-America Rose Selections, Inc. This association of growers, founded in 1938, is dedicated to bringing better roses to American gardens through research and improved hybridization. Each year, only a few roses are deemed worthy of the AARS designation.

To receive the AARS endorsement, a rose must first prove its superior qualities during two years of trials in test gardens. These gardens are located in different parts of the country so that new varieties may be studed under varied soil and climatic conditions.

At Descanso Gardens the new roses, identified only by numbers, will be planted in raised beds on a half-acre plot near the special education greenhouse. A drip irrigation system to serve the plots is already in place. The test garden is not attached to the old rose garden which is being renovated.

Volunteer rosarians from Friends of the Rose Garden will prune the bushes, and Dr. Cohan will record his evaluation of the plants semi-annually. Before the program begins, he will receive special training on how to rate each cultivar's many characteristics ranging from fragrance and vigor to bud form, novelty and aging qualities of the flowers among other things.

A walk through the test garden will give Descanso visitors a chance to see into the future and choose their own favorites among roses that will not make their official debut until 1994.

GARDEN EVENTS

Oct. 12 13 **Plant Sale**
Descanso Gardens
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
The Guild's annual sale features old roses, camellias, drought tolerant plants, and unusual ones

Oct. 12-13 **Orchid Show**
South Coast Botanic Garden
Sat. 12-4:30 p.m. Sun. 10-4:30 p.m.
South Bay Orchid Society will display hundreds of orchids, both hybrids and species and sell exotics

Oct. 19-20 **Bonsai Show**
Arboretum
9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Santa Anita Bonsai Society will display over 100 tiny evergreens, fruit trees, etc, in classic bonsai styles like uprights, cascades and groups

Nov. 10 **Wreath Demonstration**
South Coast Botanic Garden
2 p.m.
Susan Seamans will show how to make long-lasting wreaths from pine cones and succulents

Dec. 7-8 **Historical Open House**
Arboretum
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
100 plus Santas will decorate Queen Anne Cottage, Coach Barn and Santa Anita Depot. Free tours

Dec. 7-30 **Christmas Show**
Descanso Gardens
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
"Deck the Halls" theme in Hospitality House shows Christmas around the world. Other features are wreath making demonstrations, train rides, etc

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ARBORETA AND BOTANIC GARDENS
is published quarterly by the
Los Angeles County Department of
Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

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